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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TEGUCIGALPA 001078

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SUBJECT: TFH01: AMBASSADOR AND G-16 MEET WITH FRIENDS OF DEMOCRATIC CHARTER

Classified By: Ambassador Hugo Llorens for reasons 1.4 (b/d)

¶1. (C) Summary. A delegation of the Friends of the Democratic Charter are visiting Honduras October 22-24. The Ambassador and members of his staff met with the delegation on October 22. The Ambassador hosted the G-16 donors group at his Residence the same day for a meeting with the delegation. The delegation said the Carter Center will not send a large observation mission to Honduras in the absence of a negotiated settlement, but indicated a very small mission is possible. The delegation said the purpose of its trip was to promote dialogue and was supportive of efforts by the Organization of American States (OAS) to find a negotiated solution. G-16 representatives noted that de facto regime leader Roberto Micheletti seems unconcerned about the effect the crisis is having on the Honduran people and suggested to the delegation that they tell Micheletti to place the interests of his country above all else. End Summary.

¶2. (C) The Ambassador, accompanied by DCM, USAID Director, and PolCouns, met on October 22 with a delegation of the Friends of the Democratic Charter, who were on a visit to Honduras October 22-24. The delegation was composed of Eduardo Stein, former Vice President of Guatemala; Jorge Santistevan, former Ombudsman of Peru; Jennifer McCoy, Director of Carter Center's Americas Program; Marcelo Varela, Associate Director of the Carter Center's Americas Program; and Sarah Stephens, Director of the Center for Democracy.

¶3. (C) The Ambassador said the events of June 28 were clearly a coup d'etat and explained the actions the U.S. government has taken in response. The Ambassador told the delegation that the U.S. will keep striving to restore the democratic and constitutional order in Honduras. Santistevan asked the Ambassador what will happen if there is no negotiated solution before the general elections scheduled for November ¶29. The Ambassador said the elections happen but will become riskier and more complicated without an agreement because in the absence of international observers it will be more difficult to ensure that the elections are credible. The Ambassador cautioned the delegation to be careful as the regime would likely attempt to manipulate their visit for their own benefit.

¶4. (C) After the meeting with the delegation, the Ambassador hosted a meeting between the delegation and the G-16 donors group at the Residence. The delegation told the G-16 that the Carter Center will not send a large elections observation mission to Honduras in the absence of a negotiated

settlement. McCoy added that it is possible that the Carter Center might send very small mission even without an agreement. Stein told the G-16 representatives that the mission wanted its visit to be perceived as supportive of efforts by the OAS to find a negotiated solution to the Honduran political crisis. He said that the solution to the Honduran crisis will be of assistance to the entire region and noted that Central America's institutions are weak.

McCoy told the G-16 that the delegation is promoting dialogue. She said the delegation would meet with President Jose Manuel "Mel" Zelaya, de facto regime leader Roberto Micheletti, the Supreme Court, the Attorney General, the pro-coup Civic Democratic Union (UCD), and human rights groups.

¶5. (C) The representatives of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) told the delegation that the longer the crisis goes on and international assistance remains suspended, the greater the impact on the most vulnerable population of Honduras, which is a very poor country. McCoy asked the G-16 representatives whether it is clear to the de facto regime that international assistance will remain suspended after the government elected on November 29 takes office in January 2010. The Spanish Charge d'Affaires said Micheletti seems not to feel responsibility for what happens in the country after the new government takes office and seems convinced that he will go down in history as the man who saved Honduras from Zelaya and Chavismo. McCoy also asked what message they suggested the delegation give to Micheletti. The Canadian representative suggested that the delegation tell Micheletti to put the interests of his country ahead of narrow interests.

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